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27 July 1982

Intelligence Community Assessment*

EL SALVADOR: Performance on Certification Issues - Summary

1. Although some abuses continue to occur, the monthly rate of political deaths is down 45 percent from last year and the Salvadoran government and military leaders continue to work toward curbing human and civil rights abuses, and to respond to the public's interest in participatory government as underscored by the 28 March constituent assembly elections. Nevertheless, their efforts continue to be hampered by the weaknesses of El Salvador's unsophisticated body politic. These include an inability to separate partisan and personal goals from common national priorities and a failure to put aside ideological conflicts that in the past have thwarted the democratic process.

2. Despite the rigidity of the political system and the myopia of certain of its key participants, the prospects for continuing progress--while slow and arduous--seem generally positive. The civilian government has so far been characterized generally by pragmatic compromise, with the result that political, economic, and social reforms are continuing and violence has been reduced. This position has been reinforced by the military high command, which distinguished itself as the major moderating force during the fractious political negotiations that followed the election. Led by Defense Minister Garcia, the armed forces appear increasingly aware of the psychological dimension of the war and cognizant that the insurgents are the ultimate beneficiaries of any abuses.

*This assessment reflects the judgment of the intelligence community following a meeting of the National Foreign Intelligence Board representatives on 27 July 1982 chaired by the Director of Central Intelligence.

Approved for Release

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